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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY  
OFFICE OF NATIONAL ESTIMATES

19 June 1957

STAFF MEMORANDUM NO. 34-57

SUBJECT: Cabinet Change in Iraq

1. Four days after approval of NIE 36.2-57, "The Outlook for Iraq," on 4 June, Nuri Said resigned as prime minister. After a period of uncertainty in which it at first appeared that Nuri would merely take the occasion to shake up his old cabinet, a new government has now been formed under the leadership of a conservative elder statesman and ex-prime minister, Ali Jawdat al Ayyubi. Jawdat has long been a member of the ruling oligarchy in Iraq and is unlikely to do anything contrary to the wishes of Nuri and the Palace.
2. This rather inconsiderately timed development was anticipated in Conclusion 2 and in Paragraph 11 of the estimate (note especially third sentence) and does not appear to affect the estimate's validity. However, the Board may wish to consider the desirability of circulating a reassuring note to this effect to holders of NIE 36.2-57.
3. Attached for reference are: (a) Conclusion 2 and Paragraph 11 of NIE 36.2-57, and (b) a draft note to holders of the estimate.

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Excerpts from NIE 36.2-57

"2." Iraq will probably retain its present political stability so long as Nuri Said remains active, either as premier or as the power behind the scene. However, undercurrents of opposition to the regime will probably require continuing reliance on authoritarian methods and, over the longer run, demands for broader participation in governmental affairs will probably become increasingly forceful.

"11." Nevertheless Nuri appears to be well ensconced in power, and he will almost certainly continue to be a potent influence in the political scene--whether in or out of office--so long as he remains active. In addition to the support of a considerable body of Iraqi leaders, particularly tribal elements, Nuri now enjoys the backing of the Palace. Although Nuri may in time elect, as he has before, to step down as prime minister, his influence even out of office would remain predominant. His successor would probably be one of a small rather static circle of established political leaders who share his basic outlook and orientation. Under a new and presumably weaker premier, a considerable increase in political jockeying for position and overt opposition to the government would be likely. However, Nuri and the Palace would probably be able to prevent the situation from getting out of hand. Thus, a major threat to Iraq's stability and present orientation is unlikely to arise during Nuri's active life.

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NOTE TO HOLDERS OF NIE 36.2-57; The Outlook for Iraq

Shortly after approval of this estimate on 4 June 1957, Nuri Said resigned as prime minister of Iraq; a new government has now been formed under the leadership of the veteran conservative leader and ex-prime minister, Ali Jawdat al Ayyubi. Your attention is directed to the fact that this development was anticipated in Conclusion 2 and in Paragraph 11 of the estimate (note especially third sentence) and does not appear to affect the estimate's validity.

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